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## **Governor Doyle Announces \$30,000 Emergency WHEDA Housing Grant, Other State Assistance for Tornado Victims**

Governor Jim Doyle today announced a \$30,000 emergency housing grant for the victims of last night's series of tornadoes that hit central and southern Wisconsin.

"This grant will ensure that those who had their homes destroyed can continue to have a safe place to live until they can return to them or to other permanent housing," Governor Doyle said. "And I will continue to do everything possible to make sure the people and communities impacted by these tornadoes get the help they need to make a quick recovery."

The grant is being made available through the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). The funds will help cover the cost of placement services including the cost of temporary housing for citizens displaced as a result of the tornados. Coordinated through Wisconsin Emergency Management, the grant will be administered by local emergency agencies to be named shortly.

In addition to funding from WHEDA, Governor Doyle will provide through the Department of Commerce (Commerce), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to provide emergency housing assistance to low income home owners affected by the storms. These grants can be used to pay uninsured costs to repair or help replace residences that have been damaged or destroyed. CDBG funds are also available to municipalities to help deal with damage to public infrastructure.

Commerce will work with the local units of government to administer the grants. Local officials will collect information from residents to determine the scale and scope of aidable losses, and Commerce supplies resources based on that information.

State administered CDBG funds cannot be used in so-called "entitlement areas," areas that receive direct allocations from the federal government. Most of Dane County, including Stoughton, comprises an entitlement area. However, the following Dane County communities do not fall within the entitlement area and, therefore, are eligible for state assistance: the City of Edgerton and the Villages of Belleville, Brooklyn, Cottage Grove, Dane, DeForest, Maple Bluff, Mazomanie, and Rockdale.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is participating as part of the incident command team, providing trained incident commanders, personnel, and equipment. Teams are working to remove debris, provide drinking water, and as experts to address any environmental contamination issues.

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DNR is providing Forest Fire Incident Command Teams to coordinate volunteers in Viola and Stoughton, and equipment and personnel for debris removal and wardens for security in Stoughton.

Other state agencies that have joined the effort to help these communities are:

**Department of Transportation:** will be assisting in traffic and perimeter control through the State Patrol, making variable message signs available for traffic direction, if requested by local governments, and assisting in providing replacement/duplicate records, such as vehicle titles and driver licenses that have been lost.

**Department of Health and Family Services:** will be supporting local public health departments by providing technical assistance in the form of information and assessment assistance.

Governor Jim Doyle today declared a state of emergency in Richland, Vernon, and Dane Counties following a series of tornadoes that hit Wisconsin last night. About two dozen tornadoes hit southern Wisconsin. The hardest hit areas were Stoughton in Dane County and Viola in Richland and Vernon Counties. One person was killed in Stoughton. Statewide, approximately 30 people were injured, 20-25 homes were destroyed, and 200 homes were damaged.

Read a copy of the Governor's Executive Order:

<http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=3692&locid=19>.